Dear Paul,

6/29/74

This is a hasty thanks for all the time, trouble and thought that went into your letter of the 27th, which did reach me today. There is much in it that is helpful. I am glad that this time you did send Jim a copy. Thursday, when I had to go to DC, I gave him your last letter and my response. Ialmost never fail to keep him informed, as I will with acopy of this.

However, there remain basic differences in our fundamental approach. In part this can be attributed to the differences in our personalities and experiences and in larger part to my inability to communicate fully with you over this immediate matter.

I do believe that I do owe you certain assurances. First of all, I am not going off alone, on my own kick. I began by getting Bud and Jim to come here the day after I received the transcript, having then read it independently, that is, each separately, Jim with another mutual friend who is a third lawyer. What I then planned they all agreed is the right approach. This may include an emergency use for which my wofe and Howard, who is here, will spend all the time they can preparing, it having been impossible to hire a local student to do that mechanical work. The only major change in the initial plan brings it closer to what Jim seemed then to think is necessary, a longer introduction going into more. Confirmation that I have since seen published of what I believe to be the underlying cuase of this arcane move - and Jim and Howard here agree with the possibility if not the probability- is among the factors that impelled me to make this change.

This is quite a Byzantine matter that despite your exceptional intelligence and unusually sharp powers of observation and perception appears to be beyond your experiences. They don't teach it. I simply can't take the time to spell it out and thus have to ask you, happily only in part, to take it on faith. Thex next assurance is one I hope you will find meaningful.

First of all, I am doing nothing without consultation with both Jim and Howard. This includes what I have written. I have done about 8-10,000 words of a new introduction-explanation that Howard is at this moment read, correcting and illuminating not only as I indicated in the draft but as he decides independently it should be. I add that it also includes cutting out what he thinks should be cut. He has taken one cut up with me and I have agreed to it. (I have asked him to write you independently, when I am not using this machine, giving his independent observations and comments on your letter, after which I will ask him to read and correct this and make any comment he may feel is necessary.) I have also asked two independent and mature scholars, to whom I have given copies, who also have no special knowledge of the assassination but are authentic scholors, professional scholars I trust, to read copies and indicate where they believe illumination is necessary. Howard has already done that and is gathering what documentary illumination he deems good. I have not seen or asked him what it is.

My initial draft was to give Bud and Jim an idea of the minimum I believed necessary. It was not only to minimal a minimum but confirmation of my instant analysis requires that I spell out what is afoot. Howard and I discussed this last night and I began early this morning to write what we agreed should be written. Prior to this I had arranged with Jim for him to write his, the legal part, and for us to get together this coming week to read each other's writing.

To summarize this, I am telling you that what I will be doing is what not less than we three agree should be done and that Jim is doing his part independently. If you and Bud to this there is complete agreement on the approach. I regret deeply that you can't be here to participate but we are against a political situation that is far outside your life experiences, a multi-faceted situation of the kind never taught about, and there is a real, not an imagined urgency in preparing to content with it. In doing what I can, as you will eventually learn but now must be secret from you for not whimsical reasons Jim can confirm but not expand upon, I have done for us what to this point we have never been able to do and I am terrified with the thought of what the well-intended paranoids and the nuts and the self-seekers can do by the slightest foolishness. If Jim disagrees with this evaluation he will be able to tell you independently, as will Howard in a private enclosure.

I ma not acting or deciding independely in any aspect of this. My writing will be gone over by hot less than Jim and Howard.IfI can complete this, as an urgent combination of unusual political circumstances requires, very fast, Howard will be able to edit all of it. While this is not the primary motive in rushing, it is in itself what I regard as enough reason. You sjould know that whenever it is possible I solicit other opiniins, whether or not I agree with them. In this case, because it is so exceptional, so unprecedented, on which those of us here also agree, I am going much farther. Howard is cutting what I have already written and editing it as he sees fit -independently, as h he may tell you - while I am writing this.

In short, while what we are doing collective is what you appear not to understand as the necessity, it is what we all agree is the right approach and the one needed to make an effort to contend with what we see facing us.

You should also realize that in what I am doing I am jeopardizing a considerable amout of work, some completed, as I have done in several suits.

I will in haste make an effort to address some of these disagreements. First on an article. Bluntness is not intended as impoliteness but you are not old and experienced enough to confront you academic preconceptions with reality. As I have often written you, this is by its nature and by the nature of the situation an immaturity and a futility. You have, to the best of my knowledge, never sought the professional and mature opinion I have asked you to. Phone Jim White and ask him. If there is one certain way to kill the potential of this, that is it. After the book is out, that becomes a different situation and I might well encourage you to write an article.

This is something that can easily become diffuse. It must absolutely must not go off into anything that can possibly be a tangent. More because of the politics you have not begun to comprehend. I must keep a pair of narrow focuses: this political situation, which means both Watergate and FOI; and the WC. Therefore, I will be includingNO emphatically NO new material and as you know I have prohibited any use of my own independent work on this. (Exception*** I have already done what you recommend, including an encapsulation of the Russell stuff). It is not needed and it would needlessly jeopardize what can and I believe should follow.

You have a typical scholars attitude about the native intelligence and understanding of the non-college citizen. But this is not the central point. As you, again without regard to the practical considerations, do indicate, there is a college market, not an under-educated one. But most of all I must keep in mind the political and the most sophisticated political audience. At whatever the cost to commercial success, this is my focus. If you do not come to understand it, I will be sorely disappointed. It is also what has a good if not actually the best appeal to the college audience. But regardless of these considerations, on which there is unanimity among us here, the overriding and the most practical consideration is what dominates us all. We have opportunities and obligations you do not seem to see on your own and I appear to have communicated to you. I regret that unless Howard and/or Jim can be persuasive, this may mean your taking me on faith. If it does, I hope you are capable of it and that you will try to understand that my life's experiences are not only much longer than yours but are in areas where you have none, precisely those areas that here must control what I do even against self-interest, a consideration that lawyers and courts find significant.

As soon as I read you letter and two others about which I have to talk to Jim I tried to phone him. There was no answer. I will now try again. If he is not now home I will in the end reach him but I will not be able to write further about it. Perhaps Howard, who won't be able to use this typewriter until I leave it - in moving past due - will.

Perfection is not a state of man, Paul, and I do not claim it. I can only do what at any moment I have reason to believe that on balance serves our collective interest. I do not believe or after reading your letter consider I have reason to believe that I am now about it either wrong or the wrong way.

For whatever reassurance you may derive from it I have checked with Howard. he has read half of what I have written, which does, of course, not include what I have not written and what will controlled largely by his beliefs of what what needs to explain and illuminate the transcript's contents. His comment is "pretty good." I have asked for no particulars. He is editing and eliminating and adding as he goes. Fortunately, he is familiar with my files. After this initial reading and correcting he will reread it and go further.

I did reach Jim. He had received you letter but had not yet had time to digest it. When he can he will write you. I have to put it this way because I just don't think you have any way of knowing anything about the pace at which we have to go. And do. We are into only what we cannot avoid and it is much too much.

I do hope this is persuasive and comprehensible because I have thane time for it that I would prefer to have spent on these other things and because I know my own reluctance to accept on faith. However, as Jim can tell you, with him, once I have expressed myself, I do. I never read what he has done with my drafts except a) in my own suits and b) when it is b1) possible and b2) I take the time from other things. We really are at it this intensively. So intensively that I have weeds six feet high less than 20 feet from where I sit. Closer to 10. If it does not rain when Howard and I have to take breaks we plan to off them.

Between us Jim and I have to not only do the day work case but clean up after those who mess it up. There is a current problem of this nature. It is a helluva way for both of us to live but neither feels he can abdicate. And this will come up in court, as it was a week ago and for which Jim must rush through certain legal papers for which he will not be paid and for which he will not get public credit. He do [illegible] to be able to do his, the legal part of this opus, before the middle of the coming week.

Some of your specific suggestions have been written already, others planned and some, as I have indicated, can't be done. However, I give you, for what it is or is not worth, my opinion that for the most part if not entirely what the four of us have in mind in general and the three of us with Jim and agree upon is also that which has the most probable prospect of accomplishing the combination of objectives we have in mind and at the same time has the best prospect of being able to frustrate the new corruption the fullness of which you have not yet realized.

There will be an appendix of documents, an appendix to an appendix so to speak. Some of tour suggestions coincide precisely with what we have already agreed upon. Until we get to the nittygritty I will not know if there are those we have not discussed because so many of the dates now seem to fuzz over in my mind. My impression from the one reading of your letter to that hour it is consistent with the generalities of my discussions with Jim and the specifics of Howard's and my last night discussions. Er, we are not 180° apart. If you have any other suggestions, particularly specifics like this, please do [illegible] that you can find time for and, if you can find the added time, please include clear copies of what you believe should be included, bearing in mind that we disagree entirely with you and are among us agreed that the full transcript *must* be published, and in facsimile. The situation in the Congress really requires this and is not the only reason.

Thanks very much for the time and thought and effort. Please try to keep the (I hppe!) faith.

Sincerely,